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## PAULINE VIARDOT-GARCIA TO JULIUS RIETZ (LETTERS OF FRIENDSHIP)<sup>1</sup>

WITH the following letter that period in the correspondence between Mme. Viardot and Julius Rietz is approached which stands under the sign of Gluck. For the first time in her letters, I believe, occurs any reference to Gluck. Not once did she express a desire to be heard in one of his operas. Nothing appears to have been further from her mind than such a possibility, though arias from Gluck's operas had been in her concert-repertoire for years; she had sung, indeed, excerpts from his "Orphée" as early as 1839. Certainly Mme. Viardot did not dream that with her personification of Gluck's "Orfeo" and "Alceste" she was to reach the climax of her artistic career and that she would be remembered for many years afterwards by her interpretation of these parts.

Even without other historical testimony, this letter would go far to prove that the idea of reviving Gluck's "Orfeo ed Euridice"—in Berlioz's arrangement, a cross between the original Italian version of 1764 with "Orfeo" as a male alto part and the French version of 1774 with "Orfeo" as a "haute-contre" tenor part—was somewhat in the nature of an experiment, of a "coup d'audace," as Berlioz calls it in his book "A travers chants." The phenomenal success of the revival, beginning with the *première* on November 18, 1859, was quite unexpected. It was largely attributed to Pauline Viardot-Garcia's genius in doing justice to the genius of Gluck. How deeply Berlioz was impressed with her supreme art, we know from the introduction to these letters, for it was under the impression of her "Orfeo" that he wrote the prose hymn of praise there quoted. And that his was not mere uncritical praise of an artist friend and woman with whom, as we shall see, this romantic of romantics had desperately fallen in love, is attested by the fact that he criticized Mme. Viardot for having taken a few liberties of questionable taste with the score.

June 7.

I heartily congratulate *Georg Neumark* on his splendid success, and Julius Rietz on his courage in standing before the *sacred desk*, and the Grand-Duke especially must be congratulated for his astonishing liberality. Which do you say in German, *Grossmuth* or *Grossmuethigkeit*? At all events, in this case the

<sup>1</sup> Concluded from the October issue.



MADAME VIARDOT GARCIA.

*Engraved by J. C. Arncliffe from a Photograph.*

London: Published by Smith, Elder & Co. 25, Abchurch Lane, 1863.

From E. C. Clayton's "Queens of Song." London, 1863

**7 Juni.**

Ich gratuliere herzlich *Georg Neumark* über seinen schönen Erfolg u. **Julius Rietz** über seinen Muth, vor dem *heiligen Pult* zu stehen, und besonders muss der Grossherzog ueber seine erstaunliche *Grossmüthigkeit* gratulirt werden. Wie sagt man auf Deutsch, *Grossmuth* oder *Grossmüthigkeit*? In *diesem* Fall ist jedenfalls das Wort *gross* nicht im rechten Ort. Giebt es denn in Deutschland

word *gross* is not in its proper place. Is there in Germany no fixed price for operas, and does every theatre give such *enormous sums* at its *pleasure*? Four Louis d'or !!! it is truly too ridiculous. . . .

I do not write you about my great salon. I have made myself a *present* of a room in the second story which was recently built—and have arranged it as a little study for myself. Some day I shall send you a little sketch of it. There all is gay as gay can be. The paper has a very light green ground over which bouquets of roses and small bluebells are scattered in profusion. I have put my upright piano in it, and an étagère containing the works of Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, Byron, the four great Italian poets; Don Quixote, Homer, Eschylus, Uhland, the Bible, Heine, *Hermann und Dorothea*, the 2 vols. of Lewes on Goethe. With the exception of Homer, of whom I have the translations by Jacob and Monjé (I prefer the former), all these works are, be it understood, in the original languages.

Do me the kindness to get Gluck's *Orfeo* in Italian and answer the following questions: Is this the identical Italian partition which is sung in Berlin? In what key is the first chorus? *id. id.* the air of Orfeo? the one in 3/8. Are the recitatives the same in the partition for contralto and in that for tenor? Is the rôle written throughout a fourth lower for tenor? Is it Euridice who sings, in the second act, the air with chorus in 6/8 "Cet asile aimable et tranquille"? That strikes me as very absurd, and destroys the interest one takes in this poor Orpheus who gives himself such pains to look for his wife, while she is strolling so agreeably in the *Elysian fields* and seems to be so happy that "here is naught to inflame the soul." She thinks of Orpheus as if he were a nonentity. In what key does the 3d act begin? I have an idea that in this scene the part of Orfeo ought to be totally different. At the end of the score there are several numbers, one of which I think is worthy of being always sung in the opera. It is in Ut, in *C*. The accompaniment imitates the murmuring of water, the twittering of the birds, it is full of color and light. "Quel nouveau ciel pare ces lieux."

You do not know why I ask for all this information? The reason is, that it is not impossible that I may sing Orfeo at the Théâtre Lyrique after a while, in the month of September, but nothing has been decided yet—it all depends on the *subvention* that is asked for this theatre. Should it be granted, then Orpheus will grant (tune)—his lyre, and will charm the poor devils who come to hear him (if he can).

With her letter of June 12, 1859, Mme. Viardot began a second series of "autograph" letters. Besides an autograph from her inexhaustible collection Rietz, who had fallen ill, received much friendly sympathy and the advice, almost motherly in tone, to use "*Oleum Crotonense*" as a remedy "*souverain pour la toux*." The letter was continued on the fifteenth with a charming bit of chat about her father as a composer, teacher of composition and singing:

Wednesday the 15th.

. . . In the very near future I shall send you the data concerning my father's operas. When you come to visit me *in Paris*, which is still one of my ambitions, I am going to show you my father's scores—I probably possess at least thirty of them. He had, unhappily, altogether too great facility—he

kein fester Preis für Opern, und giebt jedes Theater nach *Belieben* solche *ungeheure* Summen? Vier Louis d'or!!! es ist wahrhaftig zu lächerlich. . . .

Je ne vous écris pas de mon grand salon. Je me suis fait *cadeau* d'une des chambres du 2<sup>d</sup> étage nouvellement bâti—et je l'ai arrangé en petit cabinet de travail pour moi. Je vous en enverrai un jour un petit croquis. Il y fait gai tout plein—Le papier est fond vert très clair tout chamarré de bouquets de roses et de clochettes bleues. J'y ai mis mon pianino—une étagère contenant les ouvrages de Shakespeare, Göthe, Schiller, Byron, les quatre grands poètes italiens; Don Quichotte, Homère, Eschyle, Uhland, la Bible, *Heine*, *Hermann u. Dorothea*, les 2 vols. de Lewes sur Goethe. A l'exception d'Homère dont j'ai les traductions de Jacob et de Monjé (je préfère la 1<sup>re</sup>) tous ces ouvrages sont, bien entendu, dans la langue originale.

Faites moi le plaisir de prendre l'*Orfeo* italien de Gluck, et répondez aux questions suivantes: Est-ce identiquement la partition italienne qui se chante à Berlin? Dans quel ton est le 1<sup>er</sup> choeur? id. id. l'air d'*Orfeo*? celui en  $\frac{3}{8}$ . Les récit<sup>fs</sup> sont-ils les mêmes dans la partition pour contralto et celle pour ténor? Le rôle est-il écrit constamment une 4<sup>te</sup> plus bas pour ténor? Est-ce Euridice qui au 2<sup>d</sup> acte chante l'air avec choeurs  $\frac{6}{8}$  "Cet asile aimable et tranquille"? Cela me paraît bien absurde et détruit l'intérêt que l'on porte à ce pauvre Orphée qui se donne tant de mal pour aller chercher sa femme, tandis que celle-ci se promène si agréablement dans les *champs Elysées* et paraît si heureuse de ce que "Nul objet ici n'enflamme l'âme." Elle pense à Orphée comme à *Colin tampon*. En quel ton commence le 3<sup>me</sup> acte? c'est dans cette scène, je suppose que la partie d'Orphée doit être tout à fait différente. A la fin de la partition se trouvent plusieurs morceaux dont l'un me paraît digne d'être toujours chanté dans l'opéra. Il est en Ut, in *C*. l'accompagnement imite le murmure de l'eau, le gazouillement des oiseaux, il est plein de couleur et de lumière. "Quel nouveau ciel pare ces lieux."

Vous ne savez pas pour pourquoi je demande tous ces renseignements? c'est qu'il ne serait pas impossible que je chantasse Orfée au Théâtre Lyrique dans quelque temps, au mois de 7<sup>bre</sup>, mais il n'y a rien de fait encore—tout cela dépend de la *subvention* que l'on demande à ce théâtre. Si elle est accordée, alors Orphée accordera. . . sa lyre et charmera les pauvres diables qui viendront l'écouter (s'il le peut).

. . . Je vous expédierai très prochainement les renseignements sur les opéras de mon père. Quand vous viendrez me voir à *Paris*, ce qui est encore une des mes ambitions, je vous ferai voir les partitions de mon père—j'en ai bien une trentaine au moins. Il avait par malheur beaucoup trop de facilité—

worked somewhat like *Luca fà presto*. And I presume that he lacked the faculty of prolonged thinking before writing. His ideas rushed upon him in such an abundance that he wrote them down without taking time to choose the good ones and discard the bad ones. It is incredible, what my father wrote in the way of masses, symphonies, detached pieces, unaccompanied quartets, etc. It was my father who taught me music—when, I have no idea, because I do not remember the time when I did not know it. I have several great portfolios full of solfeggios, canons and airs written for me. And if you see the words they are set to! whatever came first—my mother wrote a good many for him, and these are generally pretty. But you ought to see my father's poetry! or rather his prose, his jargon, partly Spanish, partly French, partly Italian! One could die laughing over it, and yet it is touching, too. Well, whenever I want to practise airs which are difficult and really useful to me, I return to those which my father wrote when I was ten years old—I sang them but very little worse then, than I do now. And then my father's librettos! anything found grace in his eyes, he had no discrimination! The French did not write them so much with an eye to effect as at present. A strange fact—papa never set any opera by Metastasio to music. He had probably had his fill of them as a singer. . .

I tried my voice for the first time in this world on July the 18th, 1821. Ah, what a delightful day the 18th of July, 1859, would be for me if I then could press your hands!! who knows. . . whether you would be better by then!—how hard it is to repulse hope. . . .

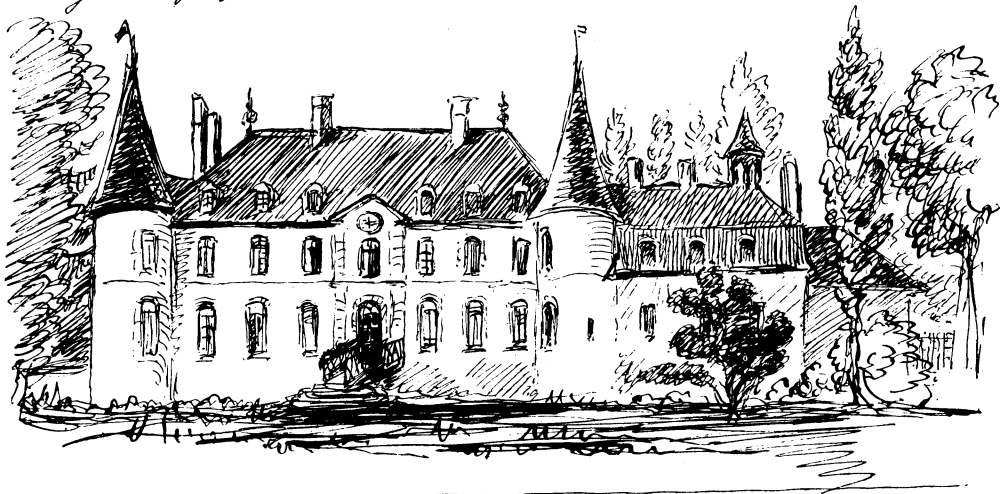
The promised data on her father's operas came shortly afterwards. The list is not printed here because it is almost illegible and because it would appeal only to exceedingly few antiquarians. Should Manuel Garcia be made the target for a doctor's thesis with the ponderous apparatus of the bio-bibliographer, I feel certain that Mr. Schirmer will put the letter—it is marked No. 41 in the series—at the disposal of the candidate.

On July first a short note informed Rietz of Mme. Viardot's engagement at the Théâtre Lyrique for four months from December first—the date was later on advanced—and of her approaching departure for her country home Courtavenel. From there her first greetings inclosed one of the very rare autographs of her not less famous sister Maria Garcia-Malibran. Pauline's own letter would be the delight of every autograph collector; and with the two pages here facsimiled before him, the reader will gladly dispense with editorial comment. The long letter is also interesting for this remark about Beethoven's seldom heard Op. 124, the overture "*Die Weihe des Hauses*":

Courtavenel, July 5, 3 o'clock.

While the tuner was tuning the second piano overhead, we downstairs were playing fourhanded at his request, so that it might be out of tune, for to-day he will tune it over again. We played the following overtures: *Coriolanus*, *Egmont*, *Leonore*, *Fidelio*, *Prometheus* and Op. 124, likewise by Beethoven. They are all wonderful, especially (in my opinion) *Coriolanus*, *Leonore*, and the

Ein ist auch alle Feinspar von gewöhnlichen Fein das Meiste  
 aber sehr brauchbar für unser Feuer — denn unser Feuer  
 ja ein Feuer ist — steht unter dem Dach —  
Vormerzung da haben wir das Haus von dem neuen Fach.  
 Nichts mehr zu tun?



Früher sahen wir viel Hagebutten im Gebirge - jetzt aber ist <sup>ni</sup> keine  
 Bracke, in statt Kirschen sind Früchte da - die Kirsche ganz z.  
 willkommen ist, der Nimmern wein ist - Durch den jungen  
 Nach <sup>nicht</sup> ~~ist~~ grünniges Gnäckchen. Ich habe eine große Leidenschaft  
 für den Gussung der Kirschen. Das Frühlingsfest hat einen vorgehenden  
 Ton - man nur, aber wirklich vörsand Vörs. Das in den Leseferien  
 anzukommen mit dem Abend. Hier sind gestern bei mir 11 Kirschen  
 im Garten geblieben. Die Luft war so rein & erfrischend und  
 stürkend zügelnd, da haben wir uns an den lieben fortwährenden  
 Vörschaften Freund danken müssen. Gehten Sie Dittmar? Gehen Sie  
 ist 2 Karffine meinem Mann & Louise zugekommen. Wissen Sie was für  
 ein Comart ist jetzt in Salou haben? Der Klassiker-Dinnerer aus David  
 schließt mein abschließendes Gnückchen mit aller Gnugalt. Sind Sie Kirschen  
 in nicht schließt für meinen Offam - Dittmar ist es ad Phoenix in moi.  
 Sie sind jetzt der meinem Gnückchen in meiner Tournelle. Das ist ein noch nicht

## Courtavenel

Facsimile of letter by Pauline Viardot-Garcia,  
July 5, 1859

jardins. Figurez vous une belle pelouse au milieu  
 entourée d'un bordure de roses et de dahlias  
 sans compter le petit menu potée de fleurs, tels  
 que réséda, pensées, géranium etc. De grand massif  
 d'arbres tout autour d'une allée assez large  
 pour une voiture. La maison a un aspect  
 très bourgeois, et même un peu exotique de ce côté  
 mais très bon enfant, si je puis m'exprimer  
 ainsi. Le rez de chaussée, un premier et les greniers,  
 voilà tout.



je ne sais pas du tout dessiner des maisons, mais je  
 compte sur votre intelligence pour comprendre mes  
 bâtonnements. Comme je vous le disais hier, celui-ci est  
 le côté bourgeois de la maison - Je tâcherai d'esquisser bientôt  
 l'autre façade, la vraie, l'ancienne, la noble. Elle  
 date du temps de Henry IV, s'il vous plaît, rien que cela!  
 Tourneelles, pont levé, rien n'y manque. Autrefois  
 c'était un grand domaine - il en est même question  
 dans certaines vieilles chroniques. Lentement, peu à peu, le  
 domaine en changeant de main s'est amoindri, jusqu'à  
 ce qu'à la grande révolution il a été morcelé, vendu  
 et est tombé dans des mains plus riches. Aujourd'hui  
 nous l'avons acheté il y a 15 ans d'un baron. Pauvre

Courtavenel

il faisait un peu comme *Luca fà presto*. Et il lui manquait, je présume, la faculté de penser longtemps avant d'écrire. Les idées lui arrivaient avec une telle abondance, qu'il les écrivait sans prendre le tems de choisir les bonnes et repousser les mauvaises. C'est un défaut, plus, c'est un malheur. C'est incroyable ce que mon père a écrit de messes, de symphonies, de morceaux détachés, de quatuors sans accompagnement, etc. C'est mon père qui m'a appris la musique—quand je n'en sais rien, car je ne me rappelle pas le tems où je ne la savais pas. J'ai plusieurs gros cahiers pleins de solfèges, de canons et d'airs écrits pour moi. Et si vous voyez sur quelles paroles! sur les premières venues—ma mère lui en a fait beaucoup—celles là sont en général jolies. Mais il faut voir la poésie de mon père! ou plutôt sa prose, son baragoin, moitié espagnol, moitié français, moitié italien! c'est à mourir de rire et touchant tout à la fois. Hé bien, quand je veux travailler des airs difficiles et réellement utiles pour moi, je reviens à ceux que mon père a fait lorsque j'avais dix ans—je les chantais de bien peu plus mal qu'à présent. Et puis les libretti de mon père! tout lui était bon, il n'y connaissait rien! Les Français n'en faisaient pas d'aussi à effet qu'à présent. Chose étrange, papa n'a jamais mis en musique d'opéra de Metastasio. Il en était probablement rassasié comme chanteur. . . .

J'ai essayé ma voix dans ce monde pour la première fois le 18 juillet 1821. Ah quelle belle fête serait pour moi si le 18 juillet 1859 je vous pouvais serrer les mains!! qui sait. . . . si vous étiez mieux d'ici là!—comme c'est difficile de repousser l'espoir. . . .

Während der Stimmer den 2<sup>ten</sup> Clavier oben stimmt, haben wir zu vier Händen unten gespielt, auf sein Begehrt, damit es falsch wird, denn heute stimmt er es noch einmal. Folgende Ouverturen haben wir gespielt: *Coriolan*, *Egmont* Lenore, *Fidelio*, *Prometheus* und op. 124, auch von Beethoven. Wundervoll sind sie alle, besonders nach meiner Meinung *Coriolan*, *Lenore* und die letzt-

one last mentioned. This one I have never heard, not even in Germany. Is that because it is not liked? that would surprise me. The fugue is so fine—it is so full of life—one feels the approach of the grandest of the grand, the gigantic Ninth Symphony. And the beginning—how noble it is, how majestic. In it all there is a breath of the antique. . . .

July 29, 1859.

Tourguénieff, the friend whom I told you about recently, is still with us; he is one of the few whom I call my friends. He speaks German and every other imaginable language admirably, and we read much together—that is, usually, for this time we did not begin Homer until yesterday. Oh, if only you were with us! Do you read well? Probably you have never tried. And, consequently, you do not know. I know nothing pleasanter than to read a good and attractive book aloud together with a sympathetic spirit, a dear friend. When you come to Courtavenel, you shall make your *début* in this capacity, too.

What you write concerning Joachim is painful, saddening—I should not have thought such a thing of him. I really begin to believe that one *can expect nothing else* nowadays. And it seems to me that the cause, unfortunately, is very simple. Nearly all artists are uneducated donkeys—lazy creatures who work at only one thing, which they call *their art*. They appear to be something as long as they are scratching or scraping or thumping or clawing or blowing on their instruments. Once the session is over, nothing remains but an ignorant, mean, selfish man whose whole thoughts are bent on making as much money as he can, whatever be the cost. Ah, assuredly it is fine to be a great artist, but on condition of being first of all and above all a man in the moral sense of the word. Poor Clara, I pity her with all my heart, for it must be a very bitter experience for her to see herself thus pushed aside by a friend. To me she has always spoken of Joachim with great affection. There was one, indeed, whom I had considered to be a fine exception among these artists—and that was this same Joachim. And now!

My husband has brought me a piece of news which quite upsets me. The paper announces that poor Roger, the tenor at the Opéra, has broken his arm by a gunshot while hunting, and that it had to be amputated to-day! It is dreadful!

On the thirty-first she elaborates on the shock which the news of his accident to her friend and famous colleague Roger had given her, and a fair idea of her remarks may be gained from her exclamation:

. . . Roger's accident pursues me like a nightmare—the thought of mutilation is for me a hundred times worse than death.

On August twenty-fourth she advised Rietz of her arrival at Baden-Baden, where she was to sing at the Berlioz Festival, and urged Rietz—of course, in vain—to pay her a flying visit and then to spend a few weeks with her and her family at Courtavenel. After her return from Baden-Baden she narrated her experiences in a letter which is interesting for more than one reason:

genannte. Ich habe diese nie gehört, in Deutschland auch nicht. Ist die etwa nicht beliebt? es sollte mich wundern. Die Fuge ist so schön—es ist so lebendig—man sieht schon die grösste der Grossen, die riesenhafte 9<sup>te</sup> Symphonie kommen. Und der Anfang, wie edel ist er nicht, wie grossartig. Das ganze hat einen parfum de l'antique.

29 Juli. 59

. . . Tourguenieff, der Freund, von dem ich neulich erzählt habe—er ist noch bei uns—er gehört zu den wenigen, die ich Freunde nenne. Er spricht deutsch vorzüglich, so wie alle mögliche Sprachen, und wir lesen viel zusammen—das heisst gewöhnlich, denn diesmal haben wir Gestern erst den Homer angefangen. O wären Sie doch dabei! lesen Sie *gut*? Sie haben es wahrscheinlich nie versucht. Und folglich wissen's nicht. Ich kenne nichts angenehmeres mit einem Sympathischen Geist, mit einem lieben Freund, ein gutes u. schönes Buch zusammen laut zu lesen. Wenn Sie nach Courtavenel kommen, werden Sie Ihr *Debut* auch in diesem *Fach* machen.

Was Sie von Joachim erzählen ist peinlich, traurig—ich hätte so was nicht von ihm geglaubt. Ich fange wirklich an zu glauben dass es jetzt *nicht anders gehen kann*. Und die Ursache scheint mir leider sehr einfach zu sein. Fast alle Künstler sind Esel ohne Erziehung—faule Kerle, die nur an eine Sache arbeiten, was sie *ihre Kunst* nennen. Ils paraissent quelque chose pendant qu'ils grattent, frottent, tapent, pincent ou soufflent de leur instrument. Une fois la séance terminée, il ne reste plus qu'un homme ignorant, mesquin, intéressé, qui ne pense qu'aux moyens de faire le plus d'argent qu'il peut, n'importe à quel prix. Ah certes, il est beau d'être un grand artiste, mais à condition d'être d'abord et avant tout un homme dans le sens moral du mot. Pauvre Clara, je la plains de tout mon cœur, car elle doit éprouver un sentiment bien amer de se voir ainsi mise de côté par un ami. Elle m'a toujours parlé de Joachim avec une grande affection. Certes, s'il y a quelqu'un que je regardais comme une belle exception parmi les artistes, c'était bien ce Joachim, et maintenant! . . .

Mon mari m'apporte une nouvelle qui me bouleverse. Le journal annonce que le pauvre Roger, le ténor de l'opéra, s'est cassé le bras à la chasse d'un coup de fusil et qu'il a fallu le lui amputer! c'est affreux!

. . . l'accident de Roger me poursuit comme un cauchemar—l'idée de la mutilation est pour moi cent fois pire que la mort. . .

Courtavenel, Sept. 20.

Here I am again in the old nest. Well, it was very nice in Baden, and the concert went off splendidly. You already know what I sang—the two duets are really very beautiful—very effective—I sang them with Mr. Lefort, an agreeable baritone. Besides these, *Romeo and Juliet*, by Berlioz, was performed, and also the overtures to *La Vestale* and *Le Pardon de Ploërmel*. The latter, despite a magnificent performance, made a complete *fiasco*—for my sake, I fancy—for this music is hateful to me. Berlioz, in my opinion, is the best symphonic conductor AFTER *somebody else*—do you know *who*?

You faint-hearted man, irresolute friend, easy-going Bear, why, oh why, did you not come? all the reasons you wrote me are nothing but bad excuses. You might have spent three days, three long, lovely days, with me, and you did not—out with the word!—*dare to!* Can you have been afraid of the woman? If that was the case, why didn't you tell me so? I cannot think of any other *intelligible* reason for your not coming. This time I have positively arrived at the point of being angry with you, if you do not *instantly confess* the real truth. —How I was hoping to see you! how happy we should have been! O naughty friend! a journey of 12 hours frightened you off!—

Berlioz must have been greatly gratified, for his music was received with tremendous applause. Do you not know *Romeo and Juliet*? and don't you think that it contains wonderful effects?

2 o'clock. The postman has just come—with No. 35. Hm! I must admit that my resentment against you is almost dissipated—very well, then, next year be it!—

Yes, the orchestra was splendid—we had four full rehearsals. The orchestras of Carlsruhe, Darmstadt, even Weimar, had sent representatives. The performance as a whole was perfect. Are you not very fond of the first part of the overture to *La Vestale* [by Spontini]? The *forte* passages in the Allegro strike me as rather common. The scenes from *Les Troyens*, particularly the one between Cassandra and Chorea, are written quite in the style of Gluck, very melodic and dramatic. Most assuredly, if the remaining parts of the five-act opera are as grand as these two scenes, Berlioz has created a masterwork.

Berlioz is going to show me the opera. Poor man! I feel very badly on his account. He is so very sick, so embittered, so unhappy! I have a great affection for him—he loves me much, I know it—he loves me only too much! But that would make a long story to tell you—and it is all too new still—I still feel too agitated to be able to write about it. Perhaps I have already said too much. A word to the wise is sufficient. Who would ever have imagined such a thing! Just think; Berlioz, after a long, cordial friendship, has had the misfortune to fall in love with me all of a sudden!

Sunday. Good-morning, dear and excellent friend. Yesterday I was interrupted in the midst of a sentence. Reading it over involuntarily, I perceive that I ought not to have written it. That seems so strange—to say things like that!—You are going to laugh at your friend—you will consider me indiscreet because I have told you—even you—a secret which is not mine; but I trust that this species of attack of nervous fever of my poor friend B. will pass over without mishap or violent scenes. He is in such an infirm condition that any emotion kills him. He himself feels that he has but a very short time to live,

*Courtavenel 2 7<sup>bre</sup>.*

Da bin ich wieder in dem alten Nest. Nun, es war ganz hübsch in Baden, und das Concert ist glänzend gewesen. Sie wissen schon was ich gesungen habe—die beiden Duetten sind wirklich sehr schön—sehr effektiv—ich habe sie mit Mr. Lefort gesungen, ein angenehmer Baryton. Ausserdem hat man *Romeo u. Julie* von Berlioz aufgeführt, so wie die Ouvertüren von der *Vestalin* und *Le Pardon de Ploërmel*. Diese hat, malgré der wundervollen Ausführung einen ordentlichen *Fiasco* gemacht—mir zu lieb, denke ich—denn mir ist diese Musik verhasst. Berlioz ist, nach meiner Meinung, der beste symphonische Dirigent *nach jemand anders*—kennen Sie *den*?

Sie muthloser Mensch, schwachwilliger Freund, bequemer Bär, warum, ach warum sind Sie nicht gekommen? was Sie mir geschrieben haben sind alle schlechte Vorwände—Sie hätten 3 Tage, 3 lange, schöne Tage mit mir erleben können, und Sie haben es nicht. . . heraus mit dem Wort, *gewagt!* fürchteten Sie sich etwa vor der Frau? Wenn das der Fall ist, warum haben Sie es nicht geschrieben? Ich kann keinen anderen Grund zu Ihrem Nichtkommen finden und *verstehen*. Ich bin diesmal wirklich auf dem Punkt böse mit Ihnen zu werden, wenn Sie mir die *wahre Wahrheit* nicht *gleich gestehen*. . . Wie hoffte ich Sie zu sehen! wie glücklich wären wir gewesen! O böser Freund! eine Reise von 12 Stunden hat Sie abgeschrocken!—

Berlioz muss sehr zufrieden gewesen sein, denn seine Musik hat einen ungeheuren Beifall gefunden. Kennen Sie nicht *Romeo u. Julie*? und finden Sie nicht dass sehr wundervolle Effekte drinn sind?

2 Uhr. Der Briefträger kommt eben—mit n. 35. Hm! ich muss gestehen, dass mein Zorn gegen Sie fast zerschmolzen ist—also gut, auf's nächste Jahr!—

Ja, das Orchester war prächtig—wir haben 4 volle Proben gehabt. Die Kapellen von Carlsruhe, Darmstadt und selbst Weimar hatten ihre Repräsentanten geschickt. Die Aufführung war im ganzen vollkommen. Lieben Sie nicht sehr den ersten theil der Ouverture von der *Vestalin*? Die Forte im Allegro kommen mir ein wenig gemein vor. Die Scenen von *Les Troyens* sind, besonders die zwischen Cassandra u. Chorea ganz im Gluck'schen Stil gehalten, sehr melodisch und dramatisch. Wahrhaftig, wenn die übrigen Theile der 5 aktigen Oper so grossartig sind wie diese beiden Scenen, so hat B. ein Meisterwerk gemacht.

Berlioz wird mir die Oper zeigen. Armer Mann! ich bin ganz betrübt wegen ihn. Er ist so sehr krank, so verbittert, so unglücklich! ich bin ihm von Herzen gut—er liebt mich sehr, ich weiss es. . . nur zu sehr liebt er mich! Aber das wäre eine ganze Geschichte zu erzählen—und die ist noch zu neu—ich bin noch zu sehr erschüttert, um darüber schreiben zu können. Vielleicht habe ich schon zu viel gesagt—“à bon entendeur, salut.” Wer hätte so etwas je ahnen können! Denken Sie nur, B. nach einer langen, guten Bekanntschaft, hat das Unglück sich blitzplötzlich in mich zu verlieben!

Sonntag. Bonjours, cher excellent ami.—J'ai été interrompue hier au milieu d'une phrase. En la relisant involontairement je m'aperçois que je n'aurais pas dû l'écrire. Cela paraît si étrange de dire ces choses là!—vous allez vous moquer de votre amie—vous allez me trouver indiscrete de vous faire part, même à vous, d'un secret qui n'est pas le mien—mais j'espère que cet espèce d'accès de *fièvre chaude* de mon pauvre ami B. passera sans malheurs ni scènes violentes. Il est dans un état si maladif que toute émotion le tue. Il sent lui même qu'il a fort peu de temps à vivre et l'idée de la mort lui fait

and the idea of death makes him revolt in horror—alas, of what use is revolt?—So I assure you that I find myself in a very painful predicament, for I feel keenly that I, and I alone, am able to give comfort to this poor bleeding heart. It is a most difficult mission, and very delicate to perform, and at the same time highly embarrassing, for I know what pain is caused by a sore heart.

I heartily rejoice in the pleasure you feel in your nomination as Honorary Member of the Philharmonic Society of London. I knew that you were to receive it. . . .

From the continuation of a letter incorrectly dated August 3, instead of September 3, a few remarks may be quoted as showing Mme. Viardot's interest in Saint-Saëns. That her confidence in his future was not misplaced, we all are happy to know:

14. Good-morning, dearest Friend. Well, Saint-Saëns played me all manner of things: The Concerto, or rather the *Symphonic Fantaisie*, the Concerto for violin, a duet for piano and violin, a charming little *Christmas Oratorio*, which has been brought out in the *Madeleine*. You surely know that S. is organist there, do you not? Furthermore, several vocal pieces, songs, four-hand pieces. You see that he has been very industrious. The lad has a great resemblance to *Weber*, in his physique. He will write to you, and send you his scores.....

Courtavenel, Thursday, Sept. 22.

For several days I have been in a melancholy mood, my dearest friend, without really knowing why. Possibly this pink paper, together with a little chat with you, may help to dissipate it. Your letter No. 36 with its kind words of friendship already did me some good yesterday. You will understand it all when you learn that Berlioz has come to spend two days with us. What I have had to suffer can not be told in words. The sight of this man, a prey to such mental and physical anguish, so unhappy in spirit, so touched by the kind reception we gave him, torn by horrible tortures of the heart, the violence of the efforts which he makes to hide them—this ardent soul bursting its bonds of clay, this life which. . . hangs only by a hair, so to speak, the vast tenderness that overflows in his gaze, in his least words—all this, I say, wrings my heart. We took a long walk together, in the course of which he became somewhat comforted and quieted. "All my life," he said to me, "has been only one long and ardent aspiration after an ideal which I had conceived for myself. My heart, eager for love, made its choice directly it found one solitary quality, one of the graces, belonging to this ideal—alas, disillusionment speedily brought the conviction that I had deceived myself. So my life has gone on, and, at the moment when I feel it to be near extinction, this ideal, which I had had to relinquish as if it were the fantastic dream of a heated imagination, appeared all at once to my dying heart! How can you hope that I should not adore it! Let me spend the last days that are left me in blessing you, in thanking you for coming to prove to me that I was not mad." Then he implored me insistently, his eyes overflowing with tears, to grant him a favour. And this favour is, that I should not refuse to visit him in case he falls seriously ill, if he should request it, and to enter his room in spite of all obstacles. I have promised—and I will do it.

He brought with him the first two acts of his opera *Les Troyens*, two superb scenes from which I sang at Baden. And indeed, my friend, I assure you that I am enthusiastic over the majority of the numbers, only excepting

horreur de révolte—hélas, à quoi sert la révolte!—Aussi, je vous assure que je me trouve dans une position fort pénible, car je sens très bien que je puis, moi seule, faire du bien à ce pauvre cœur saignant. C'est une mission bien difficile, et bien délicate à remplir, et en même temps fort difficile, car je sais le mal que fait un cœur malade.

Je me réjouis beaucoup du plaisir que vous cause votre nomination de Honorary Member de la Société Philharmonique de London. Je savais que vous deviez la recevoir. . . .

14. Bonjour, theuerster Freund—nun, Saint-Saëns hat mir allerlei vorgespielt: das Concerto, oder vielmehr *Symphonische Fantaisie*, Concert für Violine, ein Duett für piano und Violine, ein kleines, reizendes *Weihnachts Oratorium*, welches in der *Madeleine* aufgeführt worden ist. Sie wissen doch dass S. dort Organist ist, nicht wahr? Ausserdem noch mehrere Gesangstücke, Lieder, vierhändige Sachen. Sie sehen, dass er recht fleissig gewesen ist. Der Junge hat eine grosse Ähnlichkeit mit *Weber*, quant au physique. Er wird Ihnen schreiben, u. seine Partituren senden. . . .

Courtavenel. Jeudi 22. 7<sup>bre</sup>

Je suis dans un accès de tristesse depuis quelques jours, mein theuerster Freund, sans trop savoir pourquoi. Peut être que ce papier rose, joint à une petite causerie avec vous le dissiperont un peu. Votre lettre n<sup>o</sup>. 36 avec ses bonnes paroles d'amitié m'a déjà fait un peu de bien hier. Vous comprendrez tout en apprenant que Berlioz est venu passer deux jours auprès de nous. Ce qui j'ai eu à souffrir est indicible. La vue de cet homme si souffrant au moral et au physique, si malheureux dans son intérieur, si attendri du bon accueil que nous lui avons fait, en proie d'horribles tortures de cœur, la violence des efforts qu'il fait pour les cacher—cette l'ame ardente qui brise le fourreau, cette vie qui ne tient plus qu'à un cheveu pour ainsi dire, la grande tendresse qui débordait dans ses regards, dans ses moindres paroles, tout cela, dis je, m'a brisée. Nous avons fait une grande promenade ensemble, pendant laquelle il s'est un peu soulagé et calmé. "Toute ma vie," m'a-t-il dit, "n'a été qu'une longue et ardente aspiration vers un idéal que je m'étais créé. Mon cœur avide d'aimer s'est fixé dès qu'il a trouvé séparément une des qualités, une des grâces de cet idéal—hélas, le désillusionnement est venu bientôt me prouver que je m'étais trompé. Ma vie s'est passée ainsi et au moment où je la sens près de s'éteindre, cet idéal, auquel il m'avait fallu renoncer, comme à la création fantastique d'une folle imagination, apparaît tout à coup à mon cœur mourant! comment voulez-vous que je ne l'adore pas! laissez-moi passer les derniers jours qui me restent à vous bénir, à vous remercier d'être venue me prouver que je n'étais pas fou." Puis il m'a suppliée instamment, en pleurant à chaudes larmes, de lui accorder une grâce. C'est de ne pas refuser d'aller le voir en cas de maladie grave, s'il me faisait appeler, et d'entrer dans sa chambre malgré tous les obstacles. Je l'ai promis et je le ferai.

Il a apporté avec lui les deux premiers actes de son opéra *les Troyens* dont j'ai chanté deux superbes scènes à Baden. Hé bien, mon ami, je vous assure que je suis enthousiasmé de la plupart des morceaux, à l'exception de

certain passages of a shocking and unmotivated extravagance. I called his attention to them, and all that is to be altered. A veritable transformation has taken place in his talent—it is melodious, vocal, clear, sober in the accompaniment—and grandiose. There are really pages of an incredible *élan*. I swear to you that I should be happy on the day when this work should be brought out. *Qui vivrà, verra*. . . alas, I fear that B.z will not assist at the performance of his work.<sup>1</sup> All in all, you will understand that I am labouring under a very painful impression just now, for my heart is full of kindness, and the pain (quite involuntary) which I give him causes me profound grief. Whenever he shall have conquered the violence of this exalted mood (God grant that it come quickly!) I hope to be able to restore some peace to his soul. But, until then—I! It would really seem to be my destiny to care for wounded hearts—I have known no others since I have known myself. And so I feel myself peculiarly attached and drawn to them. It is something like the mission of a sister of charity, but I love it. . . .

From this letter of sadness, to one of joy! Curiously enough Mme. Viardot hardly once in all these letters or in those immediately preceding the one about to be quoted, alluded to the approaching première of Gluck's "Orphée," except to mention casually that Rietz had not yet answered her technical questions about the opera. Yet the summer at Courtavenel must have been passed in deep study of her part, for no artist, no matter how great, can achieve a triumph such as Mme. Viardot achieved, without work of the most absorbing kind. Nothing would have been more natural than to use "papier rose" or other as a kind of safety-valve for her pent-up emotions and to confide to Rietz the progress made in the study of her part, her enthusiasm for Gluck and her hopes for success. However, it would seem that Berlioz's condition had crowded everything else from her mind, so far as her correspondence with Rietz is concerned. Then came as from a fresh world of thought this shout of triumph:

November 21.

Good-morning, mon cher, lieber, caro, dear, ljubegni, querido, and extremely lazy friend. I have not had time to write to you since Friday, the day of the great battle, of the great victory. Yes, my friend, *Orphée* has emerged victorious, triumphant, from the profound oblivion in which it was plunged. It was veritably an enormous success. Your friend was acclaimed, recalled with frenzy. My house has not been empty since 9 o'clock Saturday morning. I shall play this evening,

<sup>1</sup>Mme. Viardot's prophesy came true. The first performance of "Les Troyens" took place at Karlsruhe under Felix Mottl on December 6-7, 1890. In German; in French Berlioz's ill-fated masterwork was first performed at Brussels, December 26-27, 1906! At Paris, November 4, 1863, practically only the second part "Les Troyens à Carthage"—and then in a garbled version!—was produced; the first part "La prise de Troie" did not see the light of day at Paris until November 15, 1899. Only the full score of "Les Troyens à Carthage" has been published, but in a version different from Berlioz's own, different from the version of 1863 and different from that of the revival at Paris in 1892!!—*Ed.*



From the Gazette des Beaux Arts, 1860

quelques passages d'une bizarrerie choquante et déplacée. Je lui en ai fait l'observation et tout cela va être changé. Il s'est fait une véritable transformation dans son talent—c'est mélodieux, vocal, clair, sobre d'accompagnement—et grandiose. Il y a vraiment des pages d'un élan incroyable. Je vous jure que je serai heureuse le jour où cet ouvrage sera représenté. Je vous dirai même qu'il en est vaguement question pour l'année prochaine. *Qui vivra verra...* hélas je crains que B.z n'assiste pas à l'exécution de son œuvre.<sup>1</sup> Enfin vous devez comprendre que je me trouve sous une impression fort pénible dans ce moment, car j'ai beaucoup d'amitié, et le mal (bien involontaire) que je lui fais me cause un grand chagrin. Le jour où il aura dompté la violence de cette exaltation (Dieu donne que ce soit bientôt) j'espère pouvoir apporter un peu de calme dans sa vie. Mais jusque là. . . ! Enfin, il faut croire que ma destinée est de soigner des cœurs malades—je n'en ai guère connu d'autres depuis que je me connais. Aussi m'y sens-je plus particulièrement attachée et portée. C'est un peu un métier de sœur de charité, mais je l'aime. . . .

21. 9<sup>bre</sup>.

Bonjour, mon cher, lieber, caro, dear, ljubeznī, querido, und höchst fauler Freund. Je n'ai pas eu le temps de vous écrire depuis vendredi, jour de la grande bataille, de la *grande victoire*. Oui, mon ami, *Orphée* est sorti victorieux, triomphant du profond oubli où il était plongé. C'est vraiment un succès *énorme*. Votre amie a été fêtée, rappelée avec frénésie. Ma maison n'a pas désemploi depuis Samedi à 9 h<sup>res</sup> du matin. Je joue ce soir, puis mercredi, puis vendredi, puis

then Wednesday, then Friday, then three times a week till the public and I can stand it no longer. The stage-setting is very fine, without attempting, however, to outshine the music. My costume was thought to be very handsome—a white tunic falling to the knees—a white mantle caught up at both shoulders à *l'Apollon*. Flowing tresses, curled, with the crown of laurel. A chain of gold to support the sword, whose sheath is red. A red cord around the waist—buskins white, laced with red.

Every phrase, every word was understood by an intelligent audience composed of all that Paris contains in the way of musicians, amateurs, pedants, bald heads, the world of boredom, youthful lions, etc., etc.—Well, people embraced each other in the passage-ways during the intermissions, they wept, they laughed for delight, they trampled the floor—in a word, there was a turmoil, a jubilation, such as I never have seen in Paris. The rôle of Orphée suits me as if it had been written for me. The aria di bravura<sup>1</sup> made a monstrous effect—I finished it with the following cadence: (*See facsimile*)

I fancy that you haven't an idea of the effect which can be produced by the stage-setting of the scene in the Elysian Fields—this is the way we put it together. After the air in *F*, “Cet asile aimable et tranquille,” comes the entrée of Orphée in *C*. After this recitative, the chorus in *F* is sung in the wings, Orphée remaining quite alone on the stage. Then, during the delicious instrumental number, the Shades come on in small, curious groups. Orphée seeks for Euridice among them—by the end of the number the entire chorus is on the stage. This scene in pantomime received two rounds of applause [?]. The scene in Hades is also very fine in its scenic effect. I say nothing about the musical effect, that you are acquainted with.

The Duo with Euridice (a lovely, untrained voice) also made a great impression, but the number which marked the culminating point was the air “J'ai perdu mon Euridice.” I think I have discovered three good ways of delivering the *motif*. The first time, sorrowful amazement, almost motionless. The second, choked with tears (the applause lasted two minutes, and they wanted an encore!!!). The third time, outbursts of despair. My poor Euridice remarked, as she arose: “Mph! I thought that would last forever!” . . . .

Berlioz, in “A travers chants,” while reproaching Mme. Viardot for “un changement déplorable à la fin de cet air,” for some “altérations du texte et quelques roulades déplacées dans un récitatif”—did he perhaps refer to the roulade just quoted, of which his friend was so proud?—devotes a whole page of unqualified praise to her variation in interpretation of “J'ai perdu mon Euridice” and it is evident that Mme. Viardot projected her intentions irresistibly into the audience. Berlioz said (originally in the “Journal des Débats”):

“It now remains for us to mention the culminating chef-d'œuvre of the great artist in this creation of the rôle of Orphée; by this I mean her execution of the celebrated air

*J'ai perdu mon Eurydice.*

<sup>1</sup>“L'espoir renaît dans mon âme.” This aria was borrowed by Gluck from his earlier opera “Aristeo.” Berlioz erroneously considered it an interpolation from one of Bertoni's operas. For the 1859 performance Berlioz reorchestrated and Mme. Viardot in part recomposed the aria.—*Ed.*

L'air de bourse a fait moult  
 Monstreux - plus terrible  
 Par le point d'orgue suivant

Je suis fier de  
 trop obéir de mon amour  
 Je suis fier de  
 Je suis fier de  
 Je suis fier de  
 Je suis fier de

Mme. Viardot-Garcia's cadence in Gluck's aria "L'espoir renait"

trois fois toutes semaines jusqu'à ce le public et moi n'en puissent plus. La mise en scène est fort belle, sans viser toutefois à prendre le pas sur la musique. Mon costume a été trouvé fort beau—tunique blanche descendant jusqu'aux genoux—manteau blanc retenu sur les deux épaules à l'Apollon. Cheveux longs, bouclés, avec la couronne de laurier. Une chaîne d'or pour soutenir le glaive dont le fourreau est rouge. Corde rouge à la ceinture—cothurnes blancs lacés de rouge.

Chaque phrase, chaque mot a été compris par un public intelligent, composé de tout ce que Paris renferme de musiciens, d'amateurs, de pédants, de têtes chauves, de gens blasés, de jeunes lions etc. etc.—hé bien, on s'embrassait dans les corridors, dans les entr'actes, on pleurait, on riait de bonheur, on trépignait, enfin, c'était un vacarme, une fête comme je n'en ai jamais vue à Paris. Ce rôle d'Orphée me va comme s'il avait été écrit pour moi. L'air de bravoure<sup>1</sup> a fait un effet monstreux—je l'ai terminé par le point d'orgue suivant (*See fac-simile*)

Je crois que vous n'avez pas une idée de l'effet que peut produire la mise en scène de la scène des Champs Elysées—voici comment nous l'avons combinée. Après l'air en fa "Cet asile aimable et tranquille" vient l'entrée d'Orphée en Do. Après ce recit<sup>f</sup>. on chante dans la coulisse le chœur en fa, Orphée restant tout seule en scène. Puis sur le délicieux morceau instrumental arrivent peu à peu, par petits groupes curieux, les ombres. Orphée cherche Euridice parmi elles—a la fin du morceau tous les chœurs sont en scène. Cette scène de pantomime a été applaudie pour deux fois. La scène des Enfers est très belle aussi d'effet scénique. Je ne parle pas de l'effet musical, vous la connaissez.

Le Duo avec Euridice (une belle voix sans art) a fait beaucoup d'effet aussi, mais ce qui a été le point culminant, c'est l'air "J'ai perdu mon Euridice." Je crois avoir trouvé trois bonnes manières de dire le motif. La 1<sup>re</sup> fois, douleur étonnée, presque immobile. 2<sup>me</sup> repris—étouffée par les larmes (on a applaudi pendant 2 minutes et on voulait *bis!!!*) La 3<sup>me</sup> fois éclats de désespoir. Ma pauvre Euridice a dit en se relevant "Ouf! j'ai cru que cela ne finirait jamais!" . . .

Il nous reste à signaler le chef-d'œuvre culminant de la grande artiste dans cette *création* du rôle d'Orphée; je veux parler de son exécution de l'air célèbre:

*J'ai perdu mon Eurydice.*

"Gluck somewhere made the remark: 'Change the least nuance of this air in movement or accent, and you turn it into a dance-tune.' Mme. Viardot treated it as it ought to be treated, that is to say, as what it is, one of those prodigies of expression which are wellnigh incomprehensible for vulgar singers, and which are, alas, so often desecrated. She delivered its theme in three different manners: at first in a slow movement, with suppressed grief; then, after the episodical Adagio:

*Mortel silence!*  
*Vaine espérance!*

*sotto voce, pianissimo*, with a trembling voice choked by a flood of tears; and finally, after the second Adagio, she took up the theme in a more animated movement, withdrawing from the body of Eurydice, beside which she had been kneeling, and rushing away, mad with despair, toward the other side of the stage, the very picture of frenzy in her outcries and sobs. I shall not attempt to describe the excitement of the audience at this overwhelming scene. Certain *maladroit* auditors even so far forgot themselves as to cry 'Bis!' before the sublime passage:

*Entends ma voix qui t'appelle,*

and great difficulty was experienced in imposing silence upon them. Some persons would cry 'bis!' for the scene of Priam in the tent of Achilles, or for the 'To be or not to be' of Hamlet." . . . .

As the correspondence between Mme. Viardot and Rietz progressed, their epistolary ardor gradually subsided. That is quite noticeable when reading the letters in their entirety. At any rate, Mme. Viardot again and again upbraided Rietz for his delinquency in answering her letters so irregularly. Quite naturally his intermittent silence had a retarding effect upon her and we may see the beginning of the end of their correspondence in the following lines addressed to Rietz in a half serious, half jocular vein after the twenty-third performance of "Orphée":

Paris, January 8, 1860.  
48 Rue de Douai.

(in case you have forgotten my address)

Good-morning, dear, naughty friend.

I begin by asking you *in all seriousness* what has happened, that your correspondence should have slackened in a way so unexpected and so painful. You can have no idea of the veritable grief that it causes me—and I lose myself in conjectures, not one of which do I find agreeable. This beautiful, delightful and warm friendship—could it have been nothing but a mere straw-fire on your side? Have I deluded myself to the point of taking a butterfly. . . for a bear? Have you fallen into a decline? are you sick? are you dead???! . . .

In her next letter she informed Rietz that the phenomenal success of "Orphée" had prompted the idea of the revival of another Gluck opera, his "Iphigénie en Tauride." We know that

Gluck a dit quelque part: "Changez la moindre nuance de mouvement et d'accent à cet air, et vous en ferez un air de danse." Madame Viardot en fait ce qu'il en fallait faire, c'est-à-dire ce qu'il est, un de ces prodiges d'expression à peu près incompréhensibles pour les chanteurs vulgaires, et qui sont, hélas, si souvent profanés. Elle en a dit le Thème de trois façons différentes: d'abord dans un mouvement lent avec une douleur contenue, puis, après l'adagio épique:

*Mortel silence!*  
*Vaine espérance!*

en sotto voce, pianissimo, d'une voix tremblante, étouffée par un flot de larmes, et enfin, après le second adagio, elle a repris le thème sur un mouvement plus animé, en quittant le corps d'Eurydice auprès duquel elle était agenouillée, et en s'élançant, folle de désespoir, vers le côté opposé de la scène, avec tous les cris, tous les sanglots d'une éperdue. Je n'essayerai pas de décrire les transports de l'auditoire à cette scène bouleversante. Quelques admirateurs maladroits se sont même oubliés jusqu'à crier *bis* avant le sublime passage:

*Entends ma voix qui t'appelle,*

et on a eu beaucoup de peine à leur imposer silence. Certaines gens crieraient *bis* pour la scène de Priam dans la tente d'Achille, ou pour le *To be or not to be* d'Hamlet. . . .

Paris, 8 Janvier, 60. 48 Rue de Donai

(dans le cas où vous auriez oublié mon adresse).

Bonjour, cher méchant ami. Je commence par vous demander très *sérieusement*, ce qui est arrivé pour que votre correspondance se rallentisse d'une façon aussi imprévue que pénible? Vous ne pouvez avoir une idée du véritable chagrin que j'en ressens—et je me perds en conjectures dont aucune n'est agréable pour moi. Cette belle, bienfaisante et chaude amitié n'aurait-elle été de votre côté qu'un simple *feu de paille*? Me serais-je halluciné au point de prendre un papillon. . . pour un ours? Êtes-vous tombé dans le marasme, êtes-vous malade, êtes-vous mort???. . . .

the choice finally fell on Gluck's "Alceste." In the same letter, Mme. Viardot for the first time in months found occasion to mention Richard Wagner:

February 6.

. . . Wagner stirs up the same musical feuds here, as in Germany. Unfortunately, I can not hear his concerts,<sup>1</sup> for he gives all three of them on Wednesdays, and that is the Orphée day.

The prelude to Lohengrin has created a furore. Even his enemies have to admit it. . . .

Saturday, the 25th.

Best and dearest of friends, thanks for your dear letter. I will be patient, and greet with joy the last days of your pressing work. But, once [you are] installed in Dresden, you must fire away at our correspondence to make up for lost time.

To-day I shall say only this—that it has been finally decided to give Fidelio, and that very soon. . . .

Orphée has arrived at its 44th representation! One can ask no greater success for Fidelio. . . .

When Beethoven's "Fidelio" was given at Paris in 1827, in German, this unique work with Frau Schroeder-Devrient as Fidelio-Leonore conquered Paris. When it was performed in French some twenty years later at the Théâtre Italien, it failed. For Carvalho, the director of the Théâtre Lyrique, to try "Fidelio" again on the Parisian public, was considered a rather bold venture. Under the circumstances Carvalho had every reason to congratulate himself on a success of the opera which went beyond a mere succès d'estime, for "Fidelio" is an opera altogether too German in atmosphere to become a standard work outside of Germany and Austria. Mme. Viardot—the Fidelio-Leonore of the revival—expressed similar views in a letter dated incorrectly March 20, instead of May 20, since the first performance of "Fidelio" at the Théâtre Lyrique did not take place until May 5, 1860:

. . . Fidelio has already been played six times to crowded houses. It is not a *succès d'enthousiasme* like Orphée—the elements of this work are altogether diverse. It is too symphonic for the ears of the mass of the French public. We have to confront a great prejudice against this opera. It suffered a fiasco eight years ago when played at the Théâtre Italien. At the second performance, the auditorium was empty. A sad precedent to divert the public mind from! The performance is *conventional*. Our Rocco is perfect. The others are not bad, neither are they good. . . . The chorus sings passably, but they ought to be far more numerous. Altogether, the work can afford pleasure to the amateurs as it is performed, and it brings in money.

I have sung 78 times since the middle of November, and I am not fatigued...

<sup>1</sup>These historic concerts took place at the Théâtre Italien on January 25, February 1 and 8, 1860.

6 Fév.

. . . Wagner erregt hier dieselben musikalischen Streiten wie in Deutschland. Leider kann ich nicht seine Concerten hören,<sup>1</sup> denn er giebt sie alle drei Mittwoch und das ist ein Orphée Tag.

Die Einleitung von Lohengrin hat Furore gemacht. Selbst die Feinden müssen es zugestehen. . . .

Samedi 25.

Bester, theuerster Freund, danke für den lieben Brief. Ich werde geduldig sein, und mit Freude die letzten Tage Ihrer drückenden Arbeit grüssen. Aber, einmal in Dresden *installiert*, muss die Correspondenz los geschossen werden, um die verlorene Zeit einzuholen.

Heute werde ich nur dies sagen: dass es endlich fest bestimmt ist, *Fidelio* zu geben, und das sehr bald. . .

Orphée en est à sa 44<sup>eme</sup> représentation! On ne peut pas souhaiter un plus grand succès à *Fidelio*. . . .

. . . *Fidelio* a déjà été joué six fois devant des salles combles. Ce n'est pas un succès d'enthousiasme comme *Orphée*—les éléments de cet ouvrage sont tout différents. Il est trop *symphonique* pour les oreilles de la masse du public français. Nous avons à combattre un grand préjugé contre cet opéra. Il a fait *fiasco* il y a 8 ans lorsqu'il a été joué au Théâtre Italien. A la 2<sup>de</sup> représentation la salle était vide. C'était là un triste antécédent à faire oublier. L'exécution est *convenable*. Notre Rocco est parfait. Les autres ne sont pas mauvais, mais ne sont pas bons. . . Les chœurs disent passablement mais il faudrait qu'ils fussent bien plus nombreux. En somme, l'ouvrage peut faire plaisir aux amateurs tel qu'il est exécuté et il fait de l'argent.

J'ai chanté 78 fois depuis le milieu du 9<sup>bre</sup> et je ne suis pas fatiguée! . . . .

A few months later, Rietz received news which shows that the race of grand-seigneurs was not yet extinct in Western Europe—in Eastern Europe it flourishes to this day, as everybody knows who has an inkling of the musical life of Russia:

Courtavenel, July 25'

Dearest, most beloved, laziest of friends, what does this sudden cessation in your correspondence signify? have you all at once become so careless, so *gleichgültig*, I mean so *indifferent*? have you forgotten the name of your best, most devoted friend? Since the 16th of May I have not heard from you again, and this eagerly awaited letter reached me after a silence of months! What has happened? what is wrong? This is so unnatural, so impossible, that I do not know what I am to think. I trust that you have had no sickness in the house—that wife, children, and especially yourself, are in the best of health. . . .

On the 12th I travelled to London, merely to sing Orphée once at Lord Dudley's. A luxury, forsooth, for a great lord! it was a great success, and the people could not believe that it was the same music they are now giving in the Italian Opera at Covent Garden with Fr. Csillag (of Vienna). The choruses went very well, and so did the little orchestra. They all came from the theatre. Although there were neither costumes nor scenery, as it was a concert, the effect was tremendous. I stayed two days longer in London so as to hear *Orfeo* in the theatre. After that I felt no more surprise that people did not recognize the work. All the tempi were dragged so slowly, all went so one thing after another, so monotonously, without nuances, positively wearisome, so old-fogyish, that it seemed to me as if there were a mouldy smell in the theatre—no, I myself did not recognize the wondrously moving work—Orfeo was so insignificant, so stupid! always turned toward the audience, whether by Euridice's grave, or in Tartarus, or in the land of eternal rest, it was all the same to him, he sang his song to the public, and the public yawned heartily. . . isn't it dreadful? even I had to yawn!!!! Full of sorrow I came home again—my sole thought being "the terrible responsibility resting on the interpreter of a great work! it is quite unutterable, we can slay a masterwork through our impotence! but then, how beautiful it is to be able to bear its weight! etc., etc."—and with such thoughts I quietly fell asleep—the following day, at six o'clock, I was eating quietly at home in Paris. . . ."

. . . Early in September I shall again make an *operatic* tour in England which will occupy 5 weeks, and from the 1st of November to the 30th of May I shall be imprisoned in the Théâtre Lyrique. Besides *Orphée* and *Fidelio*, which latter opera finally achieved real success toward the end (that reminds me that I have your German libretto here at home) I shall sing an opera by Gluck. Which would you advise? *Armide* is more effective than *Iphigénie en Tauride*, is it not? I should have to transpose all the arias a tone lower, but that does no harm, for they were composed just that way, the standard orchestral pitch being at least that much lower. What says my friend to that?

Have you been composing? how many future operas have you already conducted? how does this "Lohengrin" sound, anyhow? I *know* how the 2d act of *Tristan u. Isolde* sounds, for I have had the *honour* of singing it with Wagner himself!!!! . . . but I shall say nothing about that because it would give you too much pleasure, and I am too greatly put out at you just now to treat you in any such agreeable fashion. . . .

Courtavenel. 25 Juli.

Liebster, theuerster, allerfaulster Freund, was soll der plötzliche Stillstand in Ihrer Correspondenz heissen? sind Sie auf einmal so nachlässig, so *gleichgültig*, ich meine, *indifferent* geworden? haben Sie vergessen, wie Ihre beste ergebenste Freundin heisst? seit dem 16<sup>ten</sup> Mai habe ich nicht wieder von Ihnen gehört, und dieser sehnlich erwartete Brief kam nach einem Stillschweigen von Monaten! Was ist geschehen? was ist los? Das ist so unnatürlich, so *unmöglich*, dass ich gar nicht weiss, was ich denken soll. Ich hoffe, dass Sie keine Krankheit im Hause gehabt haben—dass Frau, Kinder und besonders Sie selbst im besten Zustande sind. . .

Am 12<sup>ten</sup> bin ich nach London gereist, blos um den *Orphée* bei Lord Dudley einmal zu singen. Voilà un luxe de grand seigneur! es hat sehr gut gelungen—und die Leute wollten gar nicht glauben, dass es dieselbe Musik war die auf die Italienische Oper, Covent Garden von Fr. Csillag (aus Wien) jetzt gegeben wird. Die Chöre gingen sehr gut, so wie das kleine Orchester. Die kamen alle vom Theater. Obwohl kein Costüm noch Scene da war, da es ein Concert war, war der Eindruck ungeheuer gross. Ich blieb in London noch 2 Tage um *Orfeo* in's Theater zu hören. Da wunderte es mich nicht mehr, dass die Leute das Werk nicht erkannten. Alle *tempi* waren so langsam geschleppt, alles ging so hintereinander so monoton, ohne nünancen wahrhaftig langweilig perruckenhaft, dass es kam mir vor als ob ein Geruch von Schimmel sich im Haus spüren liess—nein, auch ich erkannte das mächtig rührende Werk nicht—*Orfeo* war so unbedeutend, so dumm! immer zum Publikum gewendet, sei er bei dem Grabe Euridice's, sei er im Tartarus, oder im Land der ewigen Ruh, es war ihm allerlei, er sang sein Lied am Publikum und das Publikum gähnte herzlich. . . ist das nicht schlimm?—auch ich musste gähnen!!!! Ich kam nach Hause ganz traurig wieder—und dachte sur "la terrible responsabilité qu'a l'interprète d'une grande œuvre! il n'y a pas à dire, nous pouvons tuer un chef-d'œuvre sous notre impuissance! mais aussi comme il est beau d'en pouvoir porter le poids!" etc., etc. und mit solchen Gedanken schlief ich ruhig ein—am nächsten Tag um 6 Uhr, ass ich ruhig zu Hause in Paris. . .

. . . Anfangs 7<sup>ber</sup> mache ich wieder ein *operatic tour* in England, der 5 Wochen dauern wird und vom 1<sup>ten</sup> 9<sup>ber</sup> bis zum 30<sup>ten</sup> Mai bin ich im Théâtre lyrique angekettet. Ausser *Orphée* und *Fidelio*, welch letztere Oper endlich zuletzt einen wahren Erfolg hatte, (das erinnert mich dass ich Ihr deutsches *libretto* bei mir habe) werde ich eine Oper von Gluck singen. Welche würden Sie rathen? *Armide* ist mehr effektiv voll wie *Iphigenia in Tauris*, nicht wahr? Alle die Arien müsste ich um einen Ton tiefer transponiren, mais cela ne fait rien, denn gerade so sind sie komponirt worden, da der Kammerton wenigstens um so viel tiefer war. Was sagt der Freund dazu?

Haben Sie componirt? wie viele zukünftige Opern haben Sie schon dirigirt? wie klingt doch dieser "Lohengrin?" ich *weiss* wie der 2<sup>te</sup> Akt von *Tristan u. Isolde* klingt; denn ich habe die *Ehre* gehabt, es mit Wagner selbst zu singen!!!!.... ich werde aber nichts davon sagen, car cela vous ferait trop de plaisir et je suis trop fâchée avec vous dans ce moment pour vous traiter d'une façon tellement agréable. . . . .

But Mme. Viardot also refrained from telling Rietz that Wagner was much impressed by her feat of reading his Tristan music *prima vista*, a sealed book, even technically, for most singers of that period. Can modesty—or should we say dislike of a man and of his art—go farther?<sup>1</sup>

48 Rue de Douai, Oct. 19.

I am at my wit's end how to write to you, ungrateful friend that you are. I ought not to do it any longer, for I am forced to believe that you have forgotten me, after a silence of *six months*!! I have written you four or five times, I have sent you my portrait, in all my letters I have reproached you, to be sure, but these reproaches should have made you divine the great pain, the real grief that your forgetfulness has caused me!—You have taken no pity on the poor heart of a friend—you have not cared to answer with a word, a single word, to soothe and console me. You are a *wicked man*. . . whom I love with all my soul in spite of all.

Listen, I know you, I am sure that you feel embarrassment at commencing a letter at present. Confess, that is what prevents you from breaking the frigid silence which hurts me so dreadfully, so dreadfully! I implore you *with folded hands*, give me a sign of life, a token of friendship. No, do not even try to tell me why you have forgotten me. That would annoy you. Tell me that despite this forgetfulness without explanation (without reason) you still cherish friendship for her whom you have often called your best friend. . . .

Bordeaux, Dec. 15.

. . . Now I have a little rest in my theatre; for at present they are giving new operas. Until March I shall probably sing no novelty—the novelty will probably be *Armide*.

Tell me, would it be possible, in case I should have a fortnight's leave of absence, to give Orpheus in Dresden? Do you not also have Phil. Concerts? Could one not arrange something? . . . As you will not come to Paris, I must make some arrangement to take me to Germany. I *must* see you, you, dear, dearest, best-loved of all my friends.

<sup>1</sup> *The Editor* here has repeated the current opinion that Wagner was much impressed by Mme. Viardot's *prima vista* feat. But was he? It is true that he wrote in the "Bayreuther Blätter," 1890—hence obviously the legend—that she sang "einen ganzen Akt der Isolde ausdrucksvoll vom Blatt," but he must have forgotten completely what he had written twenty years previously in his autobiography:

"I improvised a special audition for her [Mme. Kalergis] of the second act of 'Tristan,' in which Mme. Viardot, whose friendship I succeeded in gaining on this occasion, was to share the singing parts with myself; while for the pianoforte accompaniment I had summoned Klindworth at my own expense from London. This very curious, intime performance took place at Mme. Viardot's home. Besides Madame Kalergis, in whose honor alone it was given, Berlioz was the only person present. Mme. Viardot had especially charged herself with securing his presence, apparently with the avowed object of easing the strained relations between Berlioz and myself. I was never clear as to the effect produced upon both performers and listeners by the presentation under such circumstances of this eccentric fragment. Mme. Kalergis remained dumb. Berlioz merely expressed praise of the *chaleur* of my delivery, which may very well have afforded a strong contrast to that of my partner, who generally merely marked her part with half voice. Klindworth seemed particularly stirred to anger at the situation. His own share was admirably executed; but he declared that he had been consumed with indignation at observing Viardot's lukewarm execution of her part, in which she was probably determined by the presence of Berlioz."

48 Rue de Douai. 19. 8<sup>bre</sup>.

Je ne sais plus comment vous écrire, ingrat ami que vous êtes. Je ne devais plus le faire, car il faut bien que je croie que vous m'avez oubliée, après un silence de *six mois*!! je vous ai écrit quatre ou cinq fois, je vous ai envoyé mon portrait, dans toutes mes lettres je vous ai fait des reproches, il est vrai, mais des reproches qui auraient dû vous faire entrevoir la grande peine, le vrai chagrin que me causait votre oubli!—Vous n'avez pas eu pitié de mon pauvre cœur d'amie—vous n'avez pas voulu répondre un mot, un seul mot pour me tranquilliser, me consoler. Vous êtes un *méchant*. . . que j'aime de toute mon âme malgré tout.

Voyons, je vous connais, je suis sûre que vous êtes embarrassé pour commencer une lettre à présent. Avouez-le, c'est cela qui vous empêche de rompre ce silence glacial qui me fait tant de mal, tant, tant de mal! je vous en supplie à *mains jointes*, donnez-moi signe de vie, signe d'amitié. Non, n'essayez même pas de me dire pourquoi vous m'avez oubliée. Cela vous ennuerait. Dites moi que malgré cet oubli sans explication (sans raison) vous avez encore de l'amitié pour celle que vous avez souvent nommée votre beste Freundin. . . .

Bordeaux, 15<sup>ten</sup> X<sup>bre</sup>.

. . . Jetzt habe ich ein wenig Ruhe in meinem Theater; denn jetzt giebt man neue Opern. Bis März werde ich wahrscheinlich keine Neuigkeit singen—diese Neuigkeit wird wahrscheinlich *Armide* sein.

Sagen Sie mir, wäre es möglich im Fall, dass ich 14 Tage Urlaub haben könnte, den Orpheus in Dresden zu geben? haben Sie auch Phil. Concerte nicht? könnte man nicht Etwas arrangiren? . . . Da Sie nach Paris nicht kommen wollen, so muss ich etwas einrichten, um nach Deutschland zu gehen. Ich *muss* Sie sehen, Sie lieber, liebster, geliebtester aller meiner Freunde.

In Paris they are awaiting Wagner's *Tannhäuser*<sup>1</sup> with ironical impatience. While waiting, the fellow does every possible thing to *indispose* the public. His book provokes indignation in all who read it. Berlioz is raving. . . . For Mme. Tedesco, who sings the part of Venus, Wagner has written a scene in his very latest style—the poor singer *can* not possibly commit it to memory. Wagner has been ill for a fortnight, and as there were no rehearsals during that time the chorus have forgotten everything, and now the whole thing has to be rehearsed from the beginning. The Tedesco is an Italian, Morelli (Wolfram) is also from that sunny land, and these were chosen by Wagner, just these two, who can understand his music the least! O blind vanity. . . .

The next letter, of February 13, 1861, begins with some highly complimentary references to the pianist and composer Berthold Damcke (1812-1875), who is best remembered for his painstaking editorial help rendered to the Gluck-enthusiast Miss Fanny Peltan, who gave to the world the sumptuous editions of Gluck's principal scores at her own expense.<sup>2</sup> The letter then continues:

. . . But I shall be there for the other session, the most interesting for me and also, I hope, for you. I sang at the fifth concert of the Conservatoire a large portion of Gluck's *Alceste*. Everybody declares that such a success has never before been witnessed. We began with the Temple Scene (the march in *G*) in its entirety, with the choruses, the scene of the High Priest, the oracle as far as the air "Non, ce n'est point un sacrifice," all inclusive, of course. Then we skipped to the chorus in *F* minor in three-time and the air of *Alceste* which follows, "Ah, malgré moi." After this we sang several fragments from the 1st and 3d acts of the Italian and French versions, which, combined, form a sublime ensemble. The audience went fairly wild with enthusiasm. As for me, I know that I have never witnessed one in such a state. I am well aware that it is the work which produces such an impression—but, all the same, I am very happy that I could present it conformably before an audience so worthy to hear it....

Friday, the 21st [June, 1861].

. . . I have sung good old Orphée 121 times. During the course of the winter I sang twice in the Conservatoire, both times fragments from *Alceste*. . . no such *success* had ever been seen in the *hallowed hall* of the Conservatoire. It can really be termed a triumph. Immediately thereafter I was engaged for the Grand Opera to sing *Alceste*. Yes, my best friend, *Alceste!* but (why must a but always come between) the entire part, which ranges too high for me, is transposed, that is, only the arias. Rehearsals began ten days ago.

June 26. To-day I have no news to tell you, unless it be that the first act of *Alceste* which we are rehearsing makes a great effect on the stage. If the two others do the same, all will go well.<sup>3</sup> What beautiful music! what grandeur! what simplicity! what happiness to sing it!

<sup>1</sup>The long deferred première (*comp.* Prod'homme in the April, 1915, number) took place on March 13, 1861, under Dietsch, whom Wagner dubbed "Schöps d'orchestre." I have seen it stated that he conducted, not from the orchestral score, but from a first violin part!—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup>Saint-Saëns, on the other hand, is not much impressed with Damcke's editorial methods. He accuses him of "cette fièvre d'amélioration qui peut faire tant de ravages."—*Ed.*

<sup>3</sup>The *première* took place on October 21, 1861.

Man erwartet in Paris mit ironischer Ungeduld Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. En attendant thut der Mensch alles mögliche, um das Publikum zu *indisponiren*. Sein Buch empört alle, die es lesen. Berlioz ist wüthend. . . Wagner hat für Mme. Tedesco, die die Parthie der Venus singt, eine Scene in seinem aller-neuesten Styl geschrieben—die arme Sängerin *kann* sie durchaus nicht auswendig lernen. Wagner ist 14 Tage lang krank gewesen, und da während der Zeit keine Proben waren, so haben die Chöre alles vergessen, und jetzt fängt alles vom Anfang an neu einzustudieren. Die Tedesco ist eine Italiänerin, Morelli (Wolfram) ist auch von dem sonnigen Lande—und diese hat W. sich gewählt, gerade die, die am wenigsten seine Musik verstehen können! O blinde Eitelkeit.

. . . Mais j'arrive à l'autre séance, la plus intéressante pour moi et, j'espère, aussi pour vous. J'ai chanté au 5<sup>me</sup> Concert du Conservatoire une grande partie de *l'Alceste* de Gluck. Tout le monde prétend que l'on n'a jamais été témoin d'un pareil succès. Nous avons commencé par la scène du temple (la marche en sol) toute entière, avec les chœurs, la scène du G<sup>d</sup>. prêtre, l'oracle jusqu'à l'air "Non ce n'est point un sacrifice," inclusivement, versteht sich. Puis nous avons passé au Chœur en fa mineur à 3 temps et l'air d'*Alceste* qui suit "ah malgré moi." Ensuite nous avons dit plusieurs fragments des 1<sup>er</sup> et 3<sup>me</sup> actes de la version italienne et française, qui, rapprochés, forment un ensemble sublime. Le public était comme fou d'enthousiasme. Quant à moi, je sais bien que jamais je ne l'ai vu dans un semblable état. Je sais bien que c'est l'œuvre qui produit cet effet là—mais c'est égal, je suis bien heureuse d'avoir pu présenter cela convenablement à un public si réellement digne de l'entendre. . . .

Freitag, 21 [Juni, 1861]

. . . Ich habe den guten alten Orphée 121 gesungen. Im Lauf des Winters habe ich 2 Mal im Conservatoire gesungen, beidesmal Fragmente von *Alceste* . . . nie hat man in der *heiligen Halle* vom Conservatoire solch ein *succès* gesehen. Es kann wirklich ein Triumph genannt werden. Gleich darauf hat man mich an der grossen Oper engagirt um *Alceste* zu singen. Ja, bester Freund, *Alceste!* aber (warum muss immer ein aber dazwischen kommen) die ganze Parthie, die zu hoch für mich liegt, ist transpouirt, das heisst die Arien blos. Die Proben sind im Zug schon seit 10 Tagen. . . .

26 Juni. Je n'ai rien de nouveau à vous dire aujourd'hui, si ce n'est que le 1<sup>er</sup> acte d'*Alceste* que nous répétons, en scène fait un grand effet. Si les deux autres vont de même, cela marchera bien. Quelle belle musique! quelle grandeur! quelle simplicité! quel bonheur de chanter cela!

How does it happen that you did not write me when Tannhäuser was played here? Why did your curiosity to know the *real truth* not compel you to write me one word, one question? It was the man, above all, who was hissed, far more than the composition. Wagner made himself so detested in advance, by artists and public, that he was treated unjustly, in a *revolting* manner. They did not wish to hear the music. After that, if they had heard it, they might have hissed just the same! But for all that, Wagner will not have profited by the lesson, he can always boast that he was the victim of a cabal. . . .

This was practically the last letter written by Mme. Viardot during those years to Julius Rietz, unless others are extant of which I have no knowledge. This correspondence, bursting forth so suddenly, seems to have collapsed just as suddenly. Not, that further letters were not exchanged between the two friends, but the letters became too few and far between to deserve to be called a correspondence. Their contents resemble sparks from dying embers. A conventional restraint becomes noticeable, startlingly in contrast with the confidential outbursts in the letters of 1858 and 1859. They are but seldom brightened by gossip remarks like the following upon the news of the death of the first "Tristan" Schnorr von Carolsfeld shortly (July 21) after the first performance of "Tristan und Isolde" under Hans von Bülow on June 10, 1865, at Munich:

Baden, Aug. 26.

My good, best, dearest, best-loved friend, a thousand thanks for the lovely autograph; it enriches my collection.—Thank you again and again. . . .

Poor Schnorr's death fills me with consternation. I had heard nothing but good of him, both as a man and as an artist. His poor wife! She is truly to be pitied! And she, too, is surely lost to art. The murderous opera of Wagner must bear the greater share of the blame, must it not?

True, the great Wagner tenor died of a severe cold contracted after or during his creation of "Tristan," but his death was attributed by every enemy of Wagner's art to the "cruelty" of the Tristan part, in those days still considered impossible, super-human, inhuman. And is it not a curious coincidence, that the correspondence between Mme. Viardot and Julius Rietz practically came to an end with disparaging remarks about Wagner's art and had received its first nourishment from a common dislike of Liszt's art?

Mme. Viardot lived to see the sweeping onrush of the "music of the future," its conquest of the musical world and the first signs of rebellion, of a change of taste away from the cult of the "neudeutsche Musik" to the cult of still stranger and futuristic gods, at whose altars the heathen of our time worship with the



**Julius Reitz**  
From the Collection of Rud. E. Schirmer

Comment se fait-il que vous ne m'ayez pas écrit lorsque le Tannhäuser a été joué ici? Comment votre curiosité de savoir la *vérité vraie* ne vous a-t-elle pas poussé à m'écrire un mot, une question? l'homme surtout a été sifflé, bien plus que la composition. Wagner s'est tellement fait détester des artistes et du public par avance, que l'on a été injuste d'une manière *révoltante* pour lui. On n'a pas voulu entendre la musique. Après cela, si on l'avait entendue, on aurait peut être sifflé tout de même! mais c'est égal, la leçon n'aura pas profité à Wagner, il pourra toujours se vanter d'avoir été la victime d'une cabale. . . .

Baden, 26 Aug<sup>e</sup>.

Mein guter, bester, liebster, theuerster Freund, tausendmal Dank für das schöne Autograph, es bereichert meinen Schatz—Dank, und noch mal Dank. . .

Der Tod des armen Schnorr hat mich ganz consterniert. Ich hatte nur Gutes von ihm gehört als Mensch und als Künstler. Seine arme Frau! Die ist wirklich zu bedauern! Da ist sie auch gewiss der Kunst verloren. Die mörderische Oper von Wagner ist doch auch zum grösstentheil daran Schuld, nicht wahr?

same ardent and sincere zeal as did sixty years ago the "long-haired horde" at the altars of Liszt and Wagner in Weimar. What Wagner would have thought of Rich. Strauss, Debussy, Stravinsky and Schoenberg, if he had lived to hear their message of art, that, of course, would be futile and impossible to tell. But, since Wagner, too, after all is said, was rooted in his time and presumably was no exception to other geniuses, perhaps he and Pauline Viardot-Garcia would have reached an amicable understanding on the common grounds of worship of Gluck and inability to fathom the creed of those of us for whom the "music of the future" of the sixties has become the art of a classic past.

(Translated by Theodore Baker.)